

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MARYLAND

In the Matter of the Petition of GRACE
OCEAN PRIVATE LIMITED, *et al.*, for
Exoneration from or Limitation of
Liability

Civ. No. JKB-24-0941

IN ADMIRALTY

*

*

*

*

*

* * * * *

MEMORANDUM AND ORDER

On Tuesday, October 1, 2024, the Court held a Hearing on the Motion (ECF No. 144) filed by certain Cargo Interests represented by the law firms of Skeen & Kauffman LLP and Hill Rivkins LLP (the “Movants”) to file late claims in this case. The general deadline for parties to file claims with respect to which Petitioners seek exoneration from or limitation of liability was Tuesday, September 24, 2024. (*See* ECF Nos. 8, 9.)

At the Hearing, Counsel for the Movants explained that they represent essentially two categories of interests. The first category comprises parties with interests in approximately 100 containers formerly aboard the M/V Dali that have sufficient information about the nature of their alleged injuries to file claims in the immediate future (“Category 1”). Counsel further explained that they represent a second category of parties that have interests in cargo formerly aboard the M/V Dali (“Category 2”). According to Counsel, parties with Category 2 interests will not have sufficient information to determine whether they have a cognizable claim in this matter until the cargo reaches its final destination and certain logistical steps relating to processing the cargo takes place (surveys, etc.). Counsel represented that, for parties with Category 2 interests, it may take until the middle of November 2024 before they have sufficient information to file claims, if any.

Counsel have therefore requested a modest extension for the Category 1 claims and have requested a lengthier extension for the Category 2 claims.

Counsel for Petitioners do not oppose the Court's granting leave for the Movants to file late claims, provided that all Movants agree to be fully bound by all Court orders and agreements between the parties made up to the date of such extension.

As discussed during the Hearing, the Court will grant limited extensions for the Movants to file late claims. However, it is the Court's expectation and intention that these extensions will in no way interfere with the orderly progress of all other proceedings in this case, including the upcoming Status and Scheduling Conference on October 29, 2024 (*see* ECF Nos. 325, 326), and any further proceedings including discovery. Moreover, the Court notes that no other extensions were requested or granted, nor does the Court anticipate granting any further extensions.

For these reasons, and for the reasons stated in open court, it is ORDERED that:

1. The October 2, 2024, deadline for Movants to file claims (*see* ECF No. 153) is VACATED.
2. Movants SHALL FILE any Category 1 claims, as described above, by Wednesday, October 9, 2024.
3. Counsel for Movants and for Petitioners SHALL MEET AND CONFER, and SHALL JOINTLY FILE a Stipulation and Proposed Order by Wednesday, October 9, 2024.

The Stipulation and Proposed Order shall:

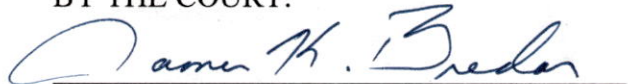
- a. Provide that the deadline for Movants to file any Category 2 claims, as described above, shall be Friday, November 22, 2024;
- b. Provide that all Movants (including Movants with claims in Categories 1 or 2) agree (subject to any appellate rights) to be bound by all Court orders—

including all dates and deadlines—issued from the inception of this case, that the Movants waive any right to contest earlier proceedings in this case on the grounds that they were not heard or did not participate, and that all other proceedings in this case will proceed notwithstanding that certain Movants have not yet filed their claims; and

- c. Include an Appendix detailing, to the highest degree of precision possible, the identities of all Movants to whom the Stipulation and Proposed Order would apply.
4. All other dates and deadlines in this case—including but not limited to the October 22, 2024 Status Report and the October 29, 2024 Status and Scheduling Conference—are UNCHANGED.

DATED this 1 day of October, 2024.

BY THE COURT:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "James K. Bredar", is written over a horizontal line.

James K. Bredar
United States District Judge